

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 2226

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA. 4., LINES 25 & 26)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FI

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT.

1. PROGRAM DIRECTOR AARRE ELO OF FINNISH BROADCASTING COMPANY'S CHANNEL 1 WHO EXPECTS TO BE IN WASHINGTON LATE NOVEMBER FOR CONSULTATION ON TV COOP PROJECT, HAS APPROACHED USIS HERE FOR ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING FILMED STATEMENT FROM PRESIDENT FORD TO BE USED BY FINNISH TV DURING DECEMBER 6 PROGRAM MARKING FINNISH INDEPENDENCE DAY. WE APPRECIATE PRESIDENT'S HEAVY SCHEDULE WOULD MAKE DIFFICULT HIS PROVIDING A FILMED STATEMENT FOR NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS OF ALL COUNTRIES BUT BELIEVE THAT CIRCUMSTANCES HERE MAY JUSTIFY EXCEPTION IN CASE OF FINLAND.

2. IT HAS BEEN US POLICY TO ENDORSE FINNISH INDEPENDENCE AND NEUTRALITY IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS AS A MEANS OF GIVING SUPPORT TO SUCH INDEPENDENCE AND NEUTRALITY. NO SUCH PUBLIC STATEMENT HAS BEEN ISSUED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE SINCE 1970 AND NO US PUBLIC STATEMENT AT ANY TIME HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE FINNISH PUBLIC BY AN ESPECIALLY FILMED TV INTERVIEW. WE BELIEVE FINNISH TV REQUEST CONSTITUTES A RARE OPPORTUNITY FOR IMPLEMENTING US POLICY AND DEMONSTRATING CONTINUED US SUPPORT FOR
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FINNISH INDEPENDENCE AND NEUTRALITY. AT A TIME WHEN

THERE IS SOME INDICATION OF A DRIFT IN FINNISH FOREIGN POLICY AWAY FROM A BALANCED POSITION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST WE BELIEVE PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT IS ESPECIALLY APPROPRIATE.

3. OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE IS THE BOOST WHICH THE PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT WOULD GIVE TO USIA'S COOPERATION WITH FINNISH TV, A MEDIUM WHICH IN THE PAST HAS TREATED THE US WITH LESS THAN TRUE OBJECTIVITY. IF WE REJECT THE FINNISH TV OFFER TO BROADCAST THE STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT FORD OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A BETTER BALANCE IN FINNISH TV COVERAGE WILL BE UNDERCUT.

4. TEXT FOR PROPOSED PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT FOLLOWS.

QTE MY DEAR FINNISH FRIENDS:

ON DECEMBER 6, 1917 THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND WAS BORN AMIDST THE TUMULT AND UPHEAVAL OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR. IN TERMS OF HISTORY, THE FIFTY-SEVEN YEARS SINCE FINLAND DECLARED ITS INDEPENDENCE IS A BRIEF PERIOD. LIKE THE UNITED STATES, FINLAND IS STILL A RELATIVELY YOUNG NATION. WE HAVE IN THE UNITED STATES ARE VERY CONSCIOUS OF NATIONAL BIRTHDAYS THESE DAYS AS WE APPROACH OUR OWN BICENTENNIAL YEAR. AMERICANS FEEL A LONG AND WARM FRIENDSHIP FOR FINLAND. COMING FROM A STATE WITH A GOOD NUMBER OF FINNISH-AMERICANS, I AM WELL AWARE OF THIS AND THE REASONS FOR IT. INDEED, FOR DECADES BEFORE YOU TOOK YOUR RIGHTFUL PLACE AMONG THE INDEPENDENT PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, MANY OF YOUR ANCESTORS AND RELATIVES HAD TRAVELED HERE AND HELPED BUILD THIS NATION. AND, IN THE YEARS SINCE YOUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, YOUR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, YOUR INDUSTRY, CREATIVITY AND INDEPENDENT SPIRIT HAVE SERVED AS CONSTANT REMINDERS OF THE MANY COMMON IDEALS SHARED BY OUR TWO REPUBLICS. NEUTRAL FINLAND CAN MAKE AND IS MAKING, A CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING, NOT ONLY IN EUROPE BUT IN THE WORLD GENERALLY. FINLAND'S CONTRIBUTION TO UN PEACEKEEPING ACTIVITIES HAS BEEN OF PARTICULAR

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SERVICE TO THE NOBLE CAUSE OF PEACE. AMERICAN PRESIDENTS BEFORE ME HAVE ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS TAKEN NOTE OF THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP OF FINLAND AND THE UNITED STATES. ON INDEPENDENT FINLAND'S FIFTY-SEVENTH BIRTHDAY, I TOO AM HAPPY TO PAY TRIBUTE TO HER AND WISH HER WELL IN THE YEARS TO COME. UNQUOTE KREHBIEL

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